New move for Met Office Lerwick

4 March 2014 - Lerwick's new and improved Met Office Observatory Building was officially opened today by Rob Varley, Met Office Operations and Services Director, continuing our proud association with the Shetland Islands spanning more than 90 years.

The opening was also attended by Tavish Scott, Member of Scottish Parliament for the Shetland Islands and Malcolm Bell, Shetland Islands Council Convenor.

The Met Office has had an observatory at Lerwick since it acquired the buildings, formerly the Admiralty's Wireless Station, in 1920. It is one of the only three manned specialist observatories in the UK. The new, purpose-built facility is equipped to provide round the clock observations of the weather in the immediate area as well as quality monitoring of a further 150 automated observation sites across the UK.

The Lerwick Observatory or 'Da Wireless' - as it is still known to many locals - has a number of different roles. Weather observations, thunderstorm detection and solar radiation measurement all contribute to the UK's weather forecasts, and provide data vital for research into the Earth's climate and atmosphere. In addition, the Observatory provides a wide range of environmental measurements for partner organisations including the British Geological Survey (BGS), the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) and Public Health Authorities across the UK.

Rob Varley said: "I am delighted to officially open the new Lerwick Observatory. The work done by the team here is vital to our national climate record, and helps ensure the accuracy of our daily forecasts. It is also carrying on a long tradition of partnership between the Met Office, our partners BGS and CEH, and the people of Lerwick."

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